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The value of Dr. Cartellieri's volume is much increased by the appended discussions, and especially by a Register which includes an epitome of no less than one hundred and one charters and letters having to do with Philip Augustus between his birth and a time shortly after the death of Louis VII. This Register Dr. Cartellieri does not propose to continue over the field so largely occupied already by M. Léopold Delisle's well-known *Catalogue des Actes de Philippe-Auguste*.

WILLISTON WALKER.

St. Thomas of Canterbury, His Death and Miracles. By EDWIN A. ABBOTT, M. A., D. D., Formerly Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge. (London: A. and C. Black. 1898. Two vols., pp. xv, 333; vii, 326.)

THIS is an uncommonly interesting and instructive work on an out-of-the-way and unpromising subject. No genuine lover of books can fail to experience a thrill of pleasure as he takes into his hands the two sumptuous volumes in which heavy paper, broad margins and bold type are lavished upon a theme in itself apparently of little more than antiquarian interest. And no one who dips into the work here and there, curious to know the reason for all this expenditure of time and labor, can fail to be fascinated and amused by the marvellous tales that crowd its pages. He will read far and long before he lays it down and he will know more about Thomas Becket's death and miracles ere he quits his delightful task than he ever knew before, and not a little into the bargain of the morbid taste, amounting even to a passion, for the miraculous in twelfth-century England.

The work had a peculiar origin. The author, a well known Biblical scholar, in preparing a critical commentary on the Gospels was led to look into the various accounts of St. Thomas's death and miracles for illustrations of the way in which the several evangelists treated their theme, and the proposed brief excursus grew gradually into the bulky work which lies before us, and what was intended as a mere illustration of the methods of the evangelists became a critical study of the greatest interest and importance, of the whole subject of historical evidence. It is as a study of evidence that the work is chiefly valuable to historical students. An extract or two from the author's own words will indicate what is meant. "From a comparison of the narratives above given the first and most general conclusion is one that must be most unsatisfactory to all those who desire short cuts to truth. For it is this: that no general rule can be laid down as to the value of an early account as compared with a later one. An early account sometimes teems with falsehoods. A later account sometimes corrects falsehoods; sometimes makes them falser and adds to their number. The value of a writing depends upon facts that are often very difficult to ascertain—namely, the position and character of the writer, his opportunities for observation, or for collecting evidence from those who have observed, and his power of setting down what he

has observed or collected, either without inferences of his own, or, at all events, in such a way as to allow the reader clearly to distinguish facts observed from facts inferred" (I. 192). "This testimony is peculiarly instructive. For it exhibits a man of learning, apparently writing in good faith, *and probably within four or five years from the martyr's death*, yet (1) assigning to the dead body a stupendous miracle not found in any of the numerous descriptions of his death that proceeded, about the same time, from competent witnesses; (2) describing a miracle wrought by the blood of the martyr while still lying on the pavement—a miracle, whether manifested then or afterwards, at all events unrecorded by any other witnesses; and (3) greatly exaggerating a miracle correctly described by an eye-witness (Benedict) and by one who was intimate with the archbishop (Fitzstephen)" (I. 241).

The immediate bearing of the author's studies upon the criticism of the Gospels will also appear from such passages as the following: "It is often said concerning the Gospels that, if some of them were written as early as thirty or forty years after Christ's death, there is not time enough to allow the growth of the legendary element from the misunderstanding of metaphor. How, it is asked, could the leaven so rapidly pervade the biographies of the Saviour that the legendary now appears almost inseparable from the historical? But here again we find a parallel and something more. Many of the accounts of the life and death of Becket were written *within five years of his martyrdom*. Many of the miracles—certainly those recorded by their earliest chronicler—were written down *at the very time of their occurrence*. Yet even in these early documents we find that writers, speaking from 'veracious relation,' record portentous falsehoods, or let us rather say *non-facts*, and that even writers depending upon the evidence of eye-witnesses, and sometimes (though much more rarely) on the witness of their own eyes, fall into astonishing errors, many of which take the direction of such amplification as to convert the wonderful but explicable into the miraculous and inexplicable." "Again, from the point of view of documentary criticism, there is much to be gained from a comparison of the martyr literature with our Gospels. As there are four Gospels, so were there four Biographies of St. Thomas, recognized in very early times as especially authoritative. Tatian in the second century made a harmony of the four Gospels, called *Diatessaron*: Elias of Evesham made a harmony of the four Biographies, and call d it *Quadrilogus*. In blending the four, the *Diatessaron* sometimes alters, sometimes inserts, sometimes confuses one with the other; so does the *Quadrilogus*." "The fourth of our Gospels was written long after the three; so was the fourth of the authoritative lives. The fourth Gospel professes to be written by one who knew Jesus as a friend; the fourth Biography was actually written by St. Thomas's intimate friend and instructor in Scripture. That Gospel makes no mention of demoniacs and recounts few miracles: that Biography expressly claims that it is written in order to bring out the Man, and implies that its object is that the Man should emerge from the miracles under which he was in danger of being

smothered. Besides our four Gospels we know that there were many others, and have reason to believe that in the variations of our Gospel MSS. we find occasional traces of earlier Gospels suppressed or neglected by the Church and now altogether lost. As regards the Biographies we are more fortunate in actually having many of those accounts of the saint's life and death that were discarded by the authors of both the Early and the Late *Quadrilogus*; and one of these we find to be in many respects far more trustworthy, and far richer in facts of interest, than some of the four authoritative Biographies. In the Gospels there are traces of different points of view in the writers: one regarding matters as a Jew might, another as a Gentile; one paying attention to style, another thinking of nothing but fact; one omitting what another inserts and *vice versa*. There are also here and there passages in which writers agree almost *verbatim*, interspersed with others where they do not agree at all, or only in the words uttered by Jesus and by those with whom he is conversing. All these phenomena recur in the Biographies and still more frequently in the two Books of Miracles" (II. 308 sq).

As a study in the psychology of the marvellous the work is also of great interest. No one can read the strange and often grotesque tales with which the pages teem without realizing, perhaps more vividly than before, that there is something here which must be always reckoned with as a large factor in the life of the race. It is true that the medieval taste for the miraculous has always been well known, but the present work affords unusual opportunities for studying that taste and for tracing the way in which it found expression in particular cases.

A. C. McGIFFERT.

Li Livres du Gouvernement des Rois, a Thirteenth Century French version of Egidio Colonna's Treatise *De Reginime Principum*, now first published from the Kerr Manuscript. Edited by SAMUEL PAUL MOLENAER, Ph.D., Instructor in the University of Pennsylvania. (New York: Columbia University Press; The Macmillan Co. 1899. Pp. xlvi, 461.)

THE most serious disadvantage under which the student of the history of political theories labors, especially in America, is the lack of proper and sufficient texts of medieval works on government. This lack was nowhere more keenly felt than in the case of the present work and, though for purposes of study the Latin version is best, every student of political theory will welcome the publication of the present French translation, which was made shortly after the Latin original was written (*c.* 1285).

This is one of the few medieval works on government which was not written to support papal or imperial pretensions to supreme temporal power. Its didactic character makes it more comparable with the political works of such men as John of Salisbury, Thomas Aquinas and Philip of Leyden than with the polemical writings of theorists like Manegold of Lautenbach, William of Ockham and Philip of Mezières. It is without